

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated May 31, 2007. Claims 1-47 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-47 have been rejected. Claims 1, 10, 20, 32, 37, and 40 have been amended to further define the scope and novelty of the present invention, to address a claim objection, as well as to correct typographical and grammatical errors, in view of the Examiner's comments, in order to place the claims in condition for allowance. Support for the amendments to the claims is found on Figure 6 and page 11, lines 11-17. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been presented. Claims 1-47 remain pending. For the reasons set forth more fully below, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as presented are allowable. Consequently, reconsideration, allowance, and passage to issue are respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

Examiner Stated:

Claim 37 recites the limitation "the second cantilevered roller shaft" in line 3.

There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

In response, claim 37 has been amended to address the above-referenced objection. Specifically, the phrase "the second cantilevered roller shaft" now reads "a second cantilevered roller shaft." Applicants respectfully submit that claim 37, as amended, now overcomes the objection.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Examiner Stated:

Claims 1-3, 9-15, 18-26 and 29-47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Miciukiewicz (US Patent 4,763,575).

Regarding claims 1, 10, 20, 32-33, 40, 41, 46 and 47, Miciukiewicz teaches a method and apparatus comprising a frame (10, 12), at least one cantilevered roller shaft (52) comprises a distal end and a proximal end (refer to figure on page 3) for advancing a document (18), wherein the proximal end is coupled to the frame of such that the distal end floats (As for advancing a document, wherein the at least one cantilevered roller shaft is supported only at one end (Figure 2) and a bushing/bushings (70, 72) coupled to the at least one cantilevered roller shaft and a spring (106) coupled to the frame and the bushings via a pressure plate (66) and attached at portion 109. ...

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejections. The present invention provides a document feeder device. The document feeder device includes a frame and at least one cantilevered roller shaft for advancing a document, where an unsupported end of the at least one cantilevered roller shaft floats, a bearing coupled to the at least one cantilevered roller shaft, and a spring coupled to the frame and the bearing such that the at least one cantilevered roller shaft is spring loaded against a drive roller shaft. Miciukiewicz does not teach or suggest these features, as discussed below.

Miciukiewicz discloses a mailing machine for conveying envelopes seriatim along a feed path toward a postage meter operatively connected to said mailing machine. The mailing machine includes a housing frame, a deck secured to the frame for supporting the envelopes, the deck having a longitudinal slot therein, a lower, driven, feed roller rotatably mounted on the frame, and an electro-mechanical tripper mounted on the frame for actuating the postage meter, the tripper projecting upwardly through the deck slot adjacent and downstream of the lower feed roller. The mailing machine

further includes a first shaft rotatably mounted on the frame perpendicular to the feed path, a second, pivotable shaft flexibly coupled at one end to an end of the first shaft, an upper feed roller rotatably mounted at the end portion of the second shaft remote from the first shaft, and means for biasing the upper feed roller against the lower feed roller, a pair of slotted, translatable bushings. Each of the bushings has an elongated slot extending substantially perpendicular to the deck, the slots slidingly engaging the second shaft. The mailing machine further includes a pressure plate having a pair of extensions on the upstream side secured to the translatable bushings and an aperture for receiving the electro-mechanical tripper. The pressure plate may translate vertically and pivot laterally and longitudinally independently of the upper feed roller to thereby assure consistent actuation of the tripper for each envelope being conveyed to the postage meter regardless of the thickness or weight of the envelope. (Abstract.)

Applicants respectfully submit that Miciukiewicz does not teach or suggest a spring coupled “to the frame and the bearing such that the at least one cantilevered roller shaft is spring loaded against a drive roller shaft,” as recited in amended independent claims 1, 10, 20, 32, and 40. The Examiner has referred to a leaf spring 106 of Miciukiewicz as teaching the spring of the present invention. However, the leaf spring of Miciukiewicz does not couple to a frame and a bearing as in the present invention. Instead, the leaf spring of Miciukiewicz couples to a cover and a plate (Figure 4). Furthermore, the leaf spring of Miciukiewicz does not couple to a frame and a bearing “such that the at least one cantilevered roller shaft is spring loaded against a drive roller shaft” as in the present invention. Instead, the leaf spring of Miciukiewicz

couples to the cover and the plate in order to provide a resilient pressure against the plate “to maintain control of the moving envelopes.”

Therefore, Miciukiewicz does not teach or suggest the cooperation of elements as recited in independent claims 1, 10, 20, 32, and 40, and these claims are allowable over Miciukiewicz.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Examiner Stated:

Claims 1-47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guaraldi et al. (US 6,122,978) in view of Jeschke (US 3,584,577).

Regarding claims 1, 10, 20, 32-34, 40-42, 46 and 47 Guaraldi teaches an apparatus and method comprising a frame (100), at least one cantilevered roller shaft (113) comprises a distal end and a proximal end for advancing a document (104), wherein the proximal end is coupled to the frame of such that the distal end floats (As shown in Figure 3 and Column 6, Lines 14-36) and the at least one cantilevered roller shaft is supported only at one end (Figure 3) and a bearing (116). However, he does not explicitly disclose a spring coupled to the frame and the bearing. Jeschke teaches a spring (23) connected to a bearing block (18) and frame.

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the invention as taught by Guaraldi to include a spring couple to a bearing and a frame as taught by Jeschke, since Jeschke teaches that it is advantageous for urging the rollers together in a tight connection to thereby dampen vibration between the rollers....

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner’s rejections. The Examiner on clarified on October 29, 2007, that the Guaraldi reference is U.S. Patent Number 6,109,180, and not U.S. Patent Number 6,122,978 as stated on the Office Action. Guaraldi discloses a printing unit with a rotatable print cylinder and a rotatable blanket cylinder. A tubular printing blanket is removably mounted on the blanket cylinder. The printing unit may have an imaging unit mounted therein. A printing member, which is mountable on the print cylinder, is imaged by the imaging unit inside the printing unit.

The printing member has a continuous surface and may be removed axially from the print cylinder. The printing unit may be configured as a cantilever printing unit, or, alternatively, may be configured with both a gear side frame and a work side frame for supporting the print and blanket cylinders. In order to provide a variable-cutoff capability, a plurality of print cylinder saddles may be provided. Each print cylinder saddle has the same inner diameter for mounting on the print cylinders. However, in order to provide a variable cut-off, the print cylinder saddles may have a variety of outer diameters. (Abstract.)

Applicants agree with the Examiner that Guaraldi does not disclose a spring coupled to the frame and the bearing. The Examiner has relied on Jeschke to cure the defects of Guaraldi. Jeschke discloses a rotary printing press includes a pair of parallel shafts surmounted respectively by a plate cylinder and a blanket cylinder, at least one travel ring acting as a Schmitz ring carried by each of the shafts and having a diameter equal at most to the diameter of the cylinder mounted on the respective shaft, at least one transmission located between the shafts and comprising two mutually peripherally engaging friction wheels, the friction wheels also peripherally engaging the travel ring respectively on the shaft adjacent thereto, the friction rollers being adjustably mounted so that frictional contact between the respective rollers and the travel rings and between the rollers themselves is maintained when the spacing between the shafts is varied. (Abstract.)

However, Jeschke does not teach or suggest a spring coupled “to the frame and the bearing such that the at least one cantilevered roller shaft is spring loaded against a drive roller shaft,” as recited in amended independent claims 1, 10, 20, 32, and 40. The

Examiner has referred to a compression spring 23 of Jeschke as teaching the spring of the present invention. However, the compression spring of Jeschke does not couple to a frame and a bearing “such that the at least one cantilevered roller shaft is spring loaded against a drive roller shaft,” as recited in the present invention. Instead, the compression spring of Jeschke achieves the opposite result. Jeschke states at column 4, lines 14-21, that the compression spring “tends to urge the bearing block 18 to rotate clockwise, as viewed in FIG. 2, about a pivot pin 20.” Referring to Figure 2 of Jeschke, rotating the bearing block 18 clockwise loads the plate cylinder 1 away from the blanket cylinder 2. This clearly teaches away from the spring of the present invention where the “at least one cantilevered roller shaft is spring loaded against a drive roller shaft.”

Therefore, Guaraldi in view of Jeschke does not teach or suggest the cooperation of elements as recited in amended independent claims 1, 10, 20, 32, and 40, and these claims are allowable over Guaraldi in view of Jeschke.

Dependent claims 2-9, 11-19, 21-31, 33-39, and 41-47

Dependent claims 2-9, 11-19, 21-31, 33-39, and 41-47 depend from independent claims 1, 10, 20, 32, and 40, respectively. Accordingly, the above-articulated arguments related to independent claim 1, 10, 20, 32, and 40 apply with equal force to claims 2-9, 11-19, 21-31, 33-39, and 41-47, which are thus allowable over the cited references for at least the same reasons as claims 1, 10, 20, 32, and 40.

CONCLUSION

Applicants' attorney believes this application is in condition for allowance.
Should any unresolved issues remain, Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

October 30, 2007

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